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The methodists

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THE

METHODISTS.

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AN ECLOGUE.

By J. ROBINSON.

NORWICH:
Printed and Publiſhed by JOHN CROUSE:

And ſold by THOMAS LONGMAN and STANLEY CROWDER, in Pater-Noſter Row; and A. and C. CORBETT, Bookſellers, oppoſite St. Dunſtan's Church, Fleet-ſtreet; LONDON.

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THE

METHODISTS.

THE Clock ſtruck Five; and, tho' no friendly Light
Broke from the Eaſt, a *Methodiſt* devout
To *N*----*h* Tabernacle took his Way,
In melancholy Mood, produc'd by Fear
Of everlaſting Pain; for yet he knew
No Feelings, ſave what ſprung from nat'ral Cauſe:
But certain inward Wamblings muſt be felt,
His Paſtor taught, 'ere Guilt has loſt its Hold.
Muſing he walk'd; when ſudden to his Ear
A Patten's Clink, light-wafted thro' the Air,

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Declar'd ſome female Step; the thick'ning Sound
Told its Approach; and ſoon a Siſter-Saint
O'ertook him: One who, long in Myſt'ries train'd,
Her wond'rous Feelings, and Salvation ſure,
Beyond the Pow'r of Hell to hinder, told.
Their Greeting paſt; —— but, 'ere the Tale proceed,
The Riſe of *Methodiſm* the Muſe ſhall ſing.

A MOUNTEBANK haranguing once a Croud,
Found all his Rhet'ric vain, his famous Pills
And wonder-working Powders left unſold:
Deeply chagrin'd, th' itin'rant Sage bewail'd
His empty Stomach, and his empty Purſe.
At length, when much he'd ponder'd to contrive
Means to relieve the preſent dire Diſtreſs,
Which Health-reſtoring Med'cines fail'd t'effect,
A new Expedient brought Supply of Pence.
Thus he began: —— "Since as I gueſs, my Friends,
"No Powders and no Pills your Bodies need,
"I'll deal ſome Phyſic to your ſickly Souls."
In formal Cant, with Eye-Balls upward turn'd,
Sermon and Exhortation then he gave;
He preach'd up Charity; told his own Caſe;
And Merry-Andrew, Clerk-like, ſaid Amen.
Then held his Hat to all the Hearers round,
And chink'd the Half-pence, as they dropp'd them in.

Henceforward,

Henceforward, elevated on a Stool,
His Hair ſtrait-hanging, thrown aſide his Bag,
Sable his Coat, a Band beneath his Chin;
In open Field, in Market, Square, or Street,
The ſkilful Doctor pour'd his Precepts forth
To liſt'ning Throngs; and Andrew ſet the Pſalm.
This to the *Methodiſtic* Scheme gave Birth:
Nor cred'lous Fools, nor ſly Pretenders, long
Were wanting to take up the gainful Trade.
At length, grown Rich and Proud, they ſcorn'd the Stool,
And then the goodly Tabernacle roſe.

So firſt, at *Athens*, on Theatric Cart,
The Tragic Verſe, by *Theſpis* fram'd, was bawl'd,
'Till Elegance and Taſte improv'd the Plan,
And bade the ſplendid Theatre appear.

But to return, —— our godly Pair trudg'd on:
Alternate thus their pious Converſe flow'd.

MAN.

Well-done, Good, Faithful, Servant, you, I find,
When Saints to Worſhip go, ne'er lag behind.
Thrice bleſs'd are you; when *Satan*'s Net is caſt
To drag off Sinners, you ſtand firm and faſt:

Your

Your Goodneſs ſhines abroad on ev'ry Side,
As from your Lanthorn gleams the Light far-wide.
For Me; I fear, *Old Nick* will ſhut my Soul
Eternal Pris'ner in ſome fiery Hole.

WOMAN.

JUST are your Fears; for you ne'er feel within
Proofs that you are not in the Yoke of Sin.
You have not learnt your worldly Cares to leave,
Tho' of Salvation they your Soul bereave.
I ſpend the Days in ſinging Hymns; in Pray'r;
I ſeldom work: My Soul's my only Care.
What tho' I frequent faſt for Want of Food;
Tho' Rags around me ſhake; my Heart is good.
'Ere Saints too much ſhould ſuffer, well I think,
The Skies would rain down Cloaths, and Meat and Drink.

MAN.

EACH Morn at Tabernacle I attend;
But 'till late Night my Labour knows no End.
Myſelf could faſt; but Children muſt be fed:
I've two, alas! whom Sickneſs holds in Bed.

WOMAN.

NO Matter: When this Morn I came away,
My helpleſs, hungry, Infant crying lay;

And

And yet a Penny, (all I have) I'll give
To help our Paſtor, bleſſed Man! to live.
Oh, had you heard laſt Night our heav'nly Guard!
Sinners had Hearts, he ſaid, like Iron hard;
Like Iron, which on Stith he us'd to beat,
Before his Heart grew hot with pious Heat.
He told, that once, as by his Forge he ſtood,
His Face turn'd pale, and icy-cold his Blood;
His Eyes were ſtaring fix'd; his Brains turn'd round;
And ſtrait he tumbled proſtrate on the Ground:
Said that a Voice (ſurely from Heav'n it came)
Bade him riſe up, and call'd him by his Name;
Bade him his Hammer and his Forge forſake;
The Teſtament, the Goſpel-Hammer, take:
To knock down Sin therewith bade him be bold;
And bade him preach the Word. Moreo'er, he told
How *Satan* tempted him (which made me weep)
Baſely to leave his Flock of ſimple Sheep;
That wicked Wolves, eager on us to prey,
Might ſafely ſteal the harmleſs Sheep away:
But no Temptation him, he ſaid, ſhould win,
'Gainſt his weak Lambs ſo cruelly to ſin.
Were it; how much each Siſter-Saint might grieve!
For none, like him, could then our Wants relieve.
Heav'n grant no ſad Diſaſter may befall
This pious Man, who lives to ſerve us all.

I well remember that unlucky Day,
When bleſſed W*****y fled from hence away;
(Forc'd by bad Men, 'cauſe he, for holy Ends,
Dear Man! was civil to his female Friends:)
We curs'd his Foes, who bore ſuch deadly Hate;
And ev'ry Woman mourn'd his hapleſs Fate.

MAN.

So have I heard: Alas! I knew not then
That heav'nly Angel, or that Beſt of Men.

WOMAN.

Happy was I; for, oh, I knew him long,
Tall as a May-pole, and as *Samſon* ſtrong:
His Looks were Saint-like, and directed high;
He flapp'd his Hat, left Fopp'ry took his Eye.
Moſt wond'rous Things he preach'd of Heav'n and Hell;
Things ſuch as none, ſave he himſelf, could tell.
Much Knowledge he diſplay'd; for more than once
I've heard him prove ev'n *Solomon* a Dunce:
Yet all his Wiſdom was pure heav'nly Light;
For he but poorly read, nor knew to write.
He told whate'er the bleſſed Saints had done:
One kept a Brandy-Shop; an Alehouſe one;
A Third, like him, wove Cloth; like him, reſign'd
His worldly Trade, to ſerve and ſave Mankind.

How

How have I ſigh'd and ſobb'd to hear him yell,
" Stop, ſtop; Turn back: Ye're in the Road to Hell."
Thus would he call, and warn us without End:
Ah! what a Loſs to loſe ſo good a Friend!

MAN.

Ah! Woe is me! Wou'd I had heard his Call;
Perchance I'd now been free from *Satan*'s Thrall;
Nor been of equal Value with the Throng
Who ſpend their leiſure Hours in Dance and Song;
Who read vile Plays and Poems, and ne'er look
In *Pilgrim's Progreſs*, or like godly Book;
Who wear fine Cloaths, and in fine Coaches ride;
Things by the D——l contriv'd to pamper Pride:
I might have priz'd myſelf above them all;
Ah! Woe is me! that I ne'er heard his Call!

WOMAN.

From Death I ſav'd him once: Bleſs'd be the Day,
When from his Foes I help'd him ſafe away.
A wicked Mob his holy Garments rent;
(For Mobs purſu'd him whereſoe'er he went;)
His brawny Limbs, Good Man, expos'd to View,
By many a cruel Thump made Black and Blue.
I ſaw't, and ſwiftly flew to give him Aid,
And 'mongſt the helliſh Crew much Havock made;

In

In either Hand a Patten whirl'd I round,
And many a Villain smote I to the Ground;
Doubtless by Miracle my Strength increas'd,
For twice two Pair of Heads I broke, at least:
Mean-while he 'scap'd; for which he said was giv'n
Security of Rest for me in Heav'n.

THERE ever with the Good Man shall I dwell;
Thence see his Enemies in burning Hell;
Some in deep Pits swept down, perhaps, by Shoals;
Some laid to broil, like Bacon, on the Coals;
Some thrown about from Fiend to Fiend with Forks;
Some laid on fiery Seas to float like Corks; ——

MAN.

BUT see; the Tabernacle, now, is near:
One Kiss, Good Sister, then we'll in to Pray'r.

FINIS.

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